VOL. I

SOME EUROPEAN NARRATIONS ON INDIA: c. 1600 - 1800

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The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India, translated into English by G. Havers in 1664; Reprint Delhi 1991. He was in India from Feb 10, 1623 to Nov 16, 1624. Extracts from pp 30-34, 82-83, 86-88, 122-123, 227-228, 230-232, 266-267, 273-277, 306-310, 316-321, 322-323, 326-329, 331-332, 336-337.

February 10, 1623

The City of Surat is of a handsome greatness, and for these Countries, of sufficiently good building : 'Tis very populous, as all other Cities and places are in *India*, which everywhere abounds with people. The Inhabitants are partly Gentiles, and partly Mahometans; and, if I am not deceived, the former are the greater number :....

[A MARRIAGE]

In the first place, I shall give you the relation of a Nuptial Pomp, which I saw one day pass by my house in this manner: A long train of men with Drums and Trumpets before them march'd in the day time first, carrying cover'd baskets, full of sundry things, which were either a present sent from the Bridegroom to the Bride, or rather the attiring of the Bride, which used to be publickly shewn in the East. Then follow'd on foot likewise some black Women-slaves, well cloth'd, being given to the Bride either by the Father, or the Husband. Lastly, to conclude the Pomp, came a Palanchino, a kind of Litter, wherein persons of quality are wont to be carry'd in **India**. It was not of the ordinary form, which hang downwards upon one pole between the bearers before, and behind; but it was carry'd on high upon poles by four men, one at each corner, and it was cover'd all over with silk, yet no body was within it; so that I know not what it serv'd for, unless haply it was intended to transport the Bride to her Husband; this different fashion being for greater solemnity made use of, in such an occasion as Marriage. At night the married couples pass'd by, and according to their mode, went round about the City with a numerous company. They were four, all very small children, two boys, and two girls; (for in *India* most marriages take place at that age), and because they were not big enough to ride on Horse-back alone, therefore they were held up by so many well-grown men, who sat upon the saddle. Before them went many Torches, and Musical instruments, with a great troop of people on foot accompanying them. But the persons of quality follow'd in Coaches, of which there was a good number, and going one by one they made a very long train, whereby it was known that the married Children were of considerable quality.

[A LARGE ARTIFICIAL POOL: GOPI TELAU]

Of remarkable things without the city, there is on one side a very large Cistern, or Artificial Pool, surrounded with stone-work, and contriv'd with many sides, and angles at which there are stairs, leading down to the surface of the water. In the midst stands a little Island, which cannot be gone to but by boat, or swimming. The Diametre of this Artificial Lake is two good furlongs, which in our parts would seem a competent largeness, but here 'tis not much; and this Fish pond of Surat is not accounted among the greatest, but the least, in India; where indeed

they are numerous, and the most magnificent, and goodly structures, or rather, the only structures in this Country which have anything of magnificence, or handsomeness. They are made in divers places by Princes, Governours of Countries, or other wealthy persons, for the publick benefit, and as works of Charity, because the soil, suitable to the Climate, is sufficiently hot, and aboundeth not in waters: Rivers are not in all places; and other running water, and springs, there are scarce any, especially in the more in-land parts remote from the Sea; Rain likewise very seldome during the whole year, saving in that season, called by them Pansecal, which signifies, the time of rain, being about three months, beginning about the middle of June, and during which time the Rain is continual, and very great; whence some upon this account call these three months Winter, although the weather be then hottest, as well in India as in all the rest of the northern Hemisphere. And this, no doubt, proceeds from the Providence of God; since, were it not for this great rain, India would be in regard of the great heat and drought at this time unhabitable; as likewise the whole torrid Zone, in which most of India lies, was believ'd to be by the Ancients, who had no knowledge of these marvellous rains, which render it not only habitable, but also fertile and most delicious.

Now for that the Country is in some parts so scarce of water, many Cities and inhabited places have no other but the rain-water gather'd in these great Cisterns which are so capacious that one of them suffices a City for a whole year and more : And it not only affords drink to men and animals but also they wash clothes and beasts in it when occasion requires, and make use of it to all purposes; whereby it comes to pass that in some places the water they have is not over clear; and the rude Indians care not for such delicacies, but 'tis enough for them if they have what is barely needful.

The Cistern or Lake of Surat hath a great trench adjoyn'd to it on one side, long, large and deep, over which certain small bridges are built; and it falls into another less Cistern a good way off, which though but small here comparatively, would yet be a very large one in our parts; 'tis built with many sides of stone like the former, as also the banks of the Trench are. Between the great Lake and the less, upon the Trench, stands a small Cupola or arched Structure, made for the sculpture of some principal Mahometans of the Country, and, as they say, of two brethren who kill'd one the other, and of their Wives. 'Tis no long time since this Cistern was made, according to the common report, by a private man of this City, but sufficiently wealthy, whose Daughter, they say, or rather one descended from him, is still living, and I know not by what sinister hap of fortune, very poor, so that she hath scarce bread to eat. Wherein I observ'd a great ingratitude of the Citizens of Surat, in suffering his heir to want food, who for their publick benefit had been at so great expense.

This poole of Surat is called Gopi Telau, that is, the Poole of Gopi, which was his name who made it at his own charge. And although the King, who in those dayes rul'd over Gusarat, did what he could to have it called after his own name, yet that of the Builder has been justly retain'd by the villager, and remains to this day.

[HINDUS DISLIKE OF SLAVERY]

But to return to the opinions of the Indians : As for good works and sins, they all agree with the Doctrine of Morality and the universal consent of Mankind, that there are differences of Virtue and Vice in all the world. They hold not onely Adultery, but even simple Fornication, a

great sin; nor do they account it lawful, as the Mahometans do, to have commerce with female slaves, or with others besides their own Wives. Yea, slaves of either sex they no-wise admit, but hold it a sin; making use of free persons for their service, and paying them wages, as we do in Europe. Which likewise was their ancient custom, as appears by Strabo, who cites Megasthenes and other Authors of those times for it. They detest Sodomy above measure, and abhor the Mahometans whom they observe addicted to it. They take but one Wife and never divorce her till death, except for the cause of Adultery.

[BELIEF IN SOUL AND TRADITION OF NON - KILLING]

Moreover the Indian-Gentiles believe that there is a Devil in the world, almost of the same conditions wherewith we conceive him; but they think too that many wretched Souls unworthy ever to have pardon from God, as the last of the great punishments which they deserve, become Devils also; than which they judge there cannot be a greater misery. The greatest sin in the world they account shedding of blood, especially that of men; and then, above all, the eating of human flesh, as some barbarous Nations do, who are therefore detested by them more than all others. Hence the strictest among them, as the Brachmans, and particularly the Boti, not onely kill not, but eat not, any living thing; and even from herbs tinctur'd with any reddish colour representing blood they wholly abstain. Others of a larger conscience eat onely fish. Others, the most ignoble and largest of all, though they kill not, nevertheless eat, all sorts of Animals good for food, except Cows; to kill and eat which all in general abhor, saying that the Cow is their Mother, for the Milke she gives and the Oxen she breeds, which plough the Earth and do a thousand other services, especially in India, where through the paucity of other Animals they make use of these more than any for all occasions. So that they think they have reason to say that Cows are the prop of the world, which perhaps they would signifie by that Fable, common also to the Mahometans, and by me formerly mention'd, that the world is supported upon the Horns of the Cow. Moreover, they have these creatures in great Veneration; for Cows being kept well in India, and living with little pains and much ease, therefore they believe that the best Souls, to whom God is pleased to give little pain in this world, pass into them.

[SCOWREING WITH COWDUNG, MUCH WASHING OF THEMSELVES]

All the Indians use many washings, and some never eat without first washing the whole body. Others will not be seen to eat by any one, and the place where they eat they first sweep, wash and scowre with water and Cow-dung. Which, besides cleanliness, is to them a Ceremonial Rite, which they think hath the virtue to purifie. But having observ'd it too in the houses of Christians, I find that indeed it cleanses exquisitely, and makes the floores and pavements of houses handsome, smooth and bright. And if the Cows and Bulls whose dung they use eat grass, it gives a pretty green to the pavement; if straw, a yellowish colour. But for the most part the floores are red, as those of Venice are, and I know not with what they give them that colour. But these and other Ceremonies, which I have not seen myself, and know onely by Relation, I willingly pass over. I shall conclude therefore with saying that by the things hitherto mention'd it appears that in the substance of Religion and what is most important all the Races of the Indians agree together, and differ onely perhaps through the necessity which is caus'd by the diversity of humane conditions in certain Rites and Ceremonies, particularly of eating more or less indistinctly.

[HOLI FESTIVAL] MARCH 15, 1623

March the fifteenth was the first day of the Feast of the Indian - Gentiles, which they celebrate very solemnly at the entrance of the Spring, with dancings through the street, and casting orange water and red colours in jest one upon another, with other festivities of Songs and Mummeries, as I have formerly seen the same in Spahan, where also reside constantly a great number of Banians and Indian Gentiles. Yet the solemnity and concourse of people was greater than in Persia, as being in their own Country and a City inhabited in a great part by Gentiles and wealthier persons. Otherwise I saw nothing at Surat during these three Festival Days but what I had seen already at Spahan, and have mentioned in my writings from that place.

[DIVALI FESTIVAL] OCTOBER 24, 1623

October the four and twentieth was the Divali, or Feast of the Indian Gentiles, and, I believe, was the same that I had seen the last year celebrated in Bender di Combru in Persia. The same day, if I mistake not in my reckoning, the Moors began their new year IO33. In the Evening I went to see another great town of Gentiles, separate from that which stands upon the Sea near Onor, and they call it the Villa di Bahmnani, because m ost of the inhabitants are Brachmans whereas they that live by the Sea-side are Fishermen, and of other like professions. This Town of the Brachmans stands about a Canon's shot within land, remote from the Fortress of Onor towards the North-East. The inhabitants keep Cows, or Buffallos, and live by other Trades. In the entrance of the City is built for publick use a handsome square Cistern, or Receptacle for Water, each side of which measured about a hundred of my paces in length; 'tis fill'd with rain-water, which lasts for the whole year.

NOVEMBER 2, 1623

[THE METHOD OF SCHOOLING: LATER KNOWN AS MONITORIAL SYSTEM]

In the mean time, while the burthens were getting in order, I entertain'd myself in the Porch of the Temple, beholding little boys learning Arithmetick after a strange manner, which I will here relate. They were four, and having all taken the same lesson from the Master, in order to get that same by heart and repeat likewise their former lessons and not forget them, one of them singing musically with a certain continu'd tone, (which hath the force of making deep impression in the memory) recited part of the lesson; as, for example, "One by its self makes one"; and whilst he was thus speaking he writ down the same number, not with any kind of Pen, nor on Paper, but (not to spend Paper in vain) with his finger on the ground, the pavement being for that purpose strew'd all over with very fine sand; after the first had writ what he sung, all the rest sung and writ down the same thing together. Then the first boy sung and writ down another part of the lesson; as, for example, "Two by its self make two", which all the rest repeated in the same manner, and so forward in order. When the pavement was full of figures they put them out with the hand, and, if need were, strew'd it with new sand from a little heap' which they had before them wherewith to write further. And thus they did as long as the exercise continu'd; in which manner likewise, they told me, they learnt to read and write without spoiling Paper, Pens, or Ink, which certainly is a prety way. I ask'd them, if they

happen'd to forget, or be mistaken in any part of the lesson, who corrected and taught them? they being all Scholars without the assistance of any Master; they answer'd me and said true, that it was not possible for all four of them to forget, or mistake in the same part, and that thus they exercis'd together, to the end that if one happen'd to be out the others might correct him. Indeed a prety, easie and secure way of learning.

NOVEMBER 3,1623

[VARNISHING FLOORS AND WALLS WITH COWDUNG PASTE]

When we arriv'd at this Town we found the pavements of the Cottages were varnish'd over with Cow-dung mix'd with water, a custom of the Gentiles in the places where they are wont to eat, as I have formerly observ'd. I took it for a superstitious Rite of Religion; but I since better understand that it is us'd only for elegancy and ornament, because not using, or not knowing how to make, such strong and lasting pavements as ours, theirs being made sleightly of Earth and so easily spoyl'd, therefore when they are minded to have them plain, smooth and firm, they smear the same over with Cow-dung temper'd with water, in case it be not liquid (for if it be there needs no water), and p laining it either with their hands, or some other instrument, and so make it smooth, bright, strong and of a fine green colour, the Cows whose dung they use never eating anything but Grass; and it hath one convenience, that this polishing is presently made, is soon dry and endures walking, or any thing else, to be done upon it; and the Houses wherein we lodg'd we found were preparing thus at our coming, and were presently dry enough for our use. Indeed this is a prety Curiosity, and I intend to cause tryal to be made of it in Italy, and the rather because they say for certain that the Houses whose pavements are thus stercorated, are good against the Plague, which is no despicable advantage. Onely it hath this evil, that its handsomeness and politeness laste th not, but requires frequent renovation, and he that would have it handsome must renew it every eight, or ten, days; yet, being a thing easie to be done and of so little charge, it matters not for a little trouble which every poor person knows how to dispatch. The Portugals use it in their Houses at Goa and other places of India; and, in brief, 'tis certain that it is no superstitious custom, but onely for neatness and ornament; and therefore 'tis no wonder that the Gentiles use it often and perhaps every day, in places where they eat, which above all the rest are to be very neat.

'Tis true they make a Religious Rite of not eating in any place where people of another Sect, or Race, (in their own opinion unclean) hath eaten, unless they first repolish the same with Cow-dung, which is a kind of purification : as we do by washing it with water, and whitening the wall (not as a Religious Rite, but through Custom), in Chambers where any one has dy'd. I said, where people not only of different Religion, but also of impure Race, have eaten, because the Gentiles are very rigorous and superstitious among themselves for a noble Race not to hold commerce or eating with others more base; yea, in one and the same Race (as in that of the Brachmans, which is the noblest), some Brachmans (as the Panditi or Boti, who are held in great esteem amongst them), will not eat in the Company, or so much as in the House, of a Brachman, Sinay or Naieke, and other Nobles who eat Fish, and are call'd by the general name Masari, and much less esteem'd then those who eat none; yet the Brachmans, Sinay and Naieke, or other species of Masari, who are inferior, eat in the House of a Pandito, or Boto, without being contaminated, but rather account it an honor.

NOVEMBER 1623

[INCIDENT OF SATI]

As we return'd home at night we met a Woman in the City of Ikkeri, who, her husband being dead, was resolv'd to burn herself, as 'tis the custom with many Indian Women. She rode on Horse-back about the City with face uncovered, holding a Looking-glass in one hand and a Lemon in the other, I know not for what purpose; and beholding herself in the Glass, with a lamentable tone sufficiently pittiful to hear, went along I know not whither, speaking, or singing, certain words, which I understood not; but they told me they were a kind of Farewell to the World and herself; and indeed, being uttered with that passionateness which the Case requir'd and might produce they mov'd pity in all that heard them, even in us who understood not the Language. She was follow'd by many other women and Men on foot, who, perhaps, were her Relations; they carry'd a great Umbrella over her, as all Persons of quality in India are wont to have, thereby to keep off the Sun, whose heat is hurtful and troublesome. Before her certain Drums were sounded, whose noise she never ceas'd to accompany with her sad Ditties, or Songs; yet with a calm and constant Countenance, without tears, evidencing more grief for her Husband's death than her own, and more desire to go to him in the other world than regret for her own departure out of this: a Custom, indeed, cruel and barbarous, but, withall, of great generosity and virtue in such Women and therefore worthy of no small praise. They said she was to pass in this manner about the City I know not how many dayes, at the end of which she was to go out of the City and be burnt, with more company and solemnity. If I can know when it will be I will not fail to go to see her and by my presence honor her Funeral with that compassionate affection which so great Conjugal Fidelity and Love seem to me to deserve.

November the sixteenth. I was told that the aforemention'd Woman, who had resolv'd to burn her self for her Husband's death, was to dye this Evening. But upon further enquiry at the Woman's House I understood that it would not be till after a few dayes more, and there I saw her sitting in a Court, or Yard, and other persons beating Drums about her. She was cloth'd all in white and deck'd with many Neck-laces, Bracelets and other ornaments of Gold; on her Head she had a Garland of Flowers, spreading forth like the rayes of the Sun; in brief she was wholly in a Nuptial Dress and held a Lemon in her hand, which is the usual Ceremony. She seem'd to be pleasant enough, talking and laughing in conversation, as a Bride would do in our Countries. She and those with her took notice of my standing there to behold her, and, conjecturing by my foreign Habit who I was, some of them came towards me. I told them by an Interpreter that I was a Person of a very remote Country, where we had heard by Fame that some Women in India love their Husbands so vehemently as when they dye to resolve to dye with them; and that now, having intelligence that this Woman was such a one, I was come to see her, that soI might relate in my own Country that I had seen such a thing with my own Eyes. These people were well pleas'd with my coming, and she her self, having heard what I said, rose up from her seat and came to speak to me.

We discours'd together, standing, for a good while. She told me that her name was Giaccama, of the Race Terlenga, that her Husband was a Drummer; whence I wonder'd the more; seeing that Heroical Actions, as this undoubtedly ought to be judg'd, are very rare in people of low quality. That it was about nineteen dayes since her Husband's death, that he had

left two other Wives elder then she, whom he had married before her, (both which were present at this discourse) yet neither of them was willing to dye, but alledg'd for excuse that they had many Children. This argument gave me occasion to ask Giaccama, (who shew'd me a little Son of her own, about six or seven years old, besides a little Daughter she had) how she could perswade her self to leave her own little Children; and I told her, that she ought likewise to live rather than to abandon them at that age. She answer'd me that she left them well recommended to the care of an Uncle of hers there present, who also talk'd with us very cheerfully, as if rejoyeing that his Kins-woman should do such an action; and that her Husband's other two remaining Wives would also take care of them. I insisted much upon the tender age of her Children, to avert her from her purpose by moving her to compassion for them, well knowing that no argument is more prevalent with Mothers than their Love and Affection towards their Children. But all my speaking was in vain, and she still answer'd me to all my Reasons, with a Countenance not onely undismay'd and constant, but even cheerful, and spoke in such a manner as shew'd that she had not the least fear of death. She told me also, upon my asking her, that she did this of her own accord, was at her own liberty and not forc'd nor perswaded by any one. Whereupon, I inquiring whether force were at any time us'd in this matter, they told me that ordinarily it was not, but onely sometimes amongst Persons of quality, when some Widow was left young, handsome, and so in danger of marrying again (which amongst them is very ignominious), or committing a worse fault; in such Cases the Friends of the deceas'd Husband were very strict, and would constrain her to burn her self even against her own will, for preventing the disorders possible to happen in case she should live (a barbarous, indeed, and too cruel Law); but that neither force nor persuasion was used to Giaccama, and that she did it of her own free will; in which, as a magnanimous action, (as indeed it was) and amongst them of great honor, both her Relations and herself much glory'd. I ask'd concerning the Ornaments and Flowers she wore, and they told me that such was the Custom, in token of the Masti's joy (they call the Woman, who intends to burn her self for the death of her Husband, Masti) in that she was very shortly to go to him and therefore had reason to rejoyce; whereas such Widows as will not dye remain in continual sadness and lamentations, shave their Heads and live in perpetual mourning for the death of their Husbands.

As last Giaccama caus'd one to tell me that she accounted my coming to see her a great fortune, and held her self much honour'd, as well by my visit and presence as by the Fame which I should carry of her to my own Country; and that before she dy'd she would come to visit me at my House, and also to ask me, as their custom is, that I would favour her with some thing by way of Alms towards the buying of fewel for the fire wherewith she was to be burnt. I answer'd her that I should esteem her visit and very willingly give her something; not for wood and fire wherein to burn her self, (for her death much displeas'd me, and I would gladly have disswaded her from it, if I could) but to do something else therewith that her self most lik'd; and I promis'd her that, so far as my weak pen could contribute, her Name should remain immortal in the World. Thus I took leave of her, more sad for her death than she was, cursing the custom of India which is so unmerciful to Woman. Giaccama was a Woman of about thirty years of age, of a Complexion very brown for an Indian and almost black, but of a good aspect, tall of stature, well shap'd and proportion'd. My Muse could not forbear from chanting her in a Sonnet which I made upon her death, and reserve among my Poetical Papers.

MANEL, DECEMBER 4, 1623

[MEETING THE QUEEN]

VII - Having landed, and going towards the Basar to get a Lodging in some House, we beheld the Queen coming alone in the same way without any other Woman, on foot, accompany'd onely with four, or six, foot Souldiers before her, who all were naked after their manner, saving that they had a cloth over their shame, and another like a sheet, worn across the shoulders like a belt; each of them had a Sword in his hand, or at most a Sword and Buckler; there were also as many behind her of the same sort, one of whom carry'd over her a very ordinary Umbrella made of Palm-leaves. Her Complexion was as black as that of a natural AEthiopian; she was corpulent and gross, but not heavy, for she seem'd to walk nimbly enough; her Age may be about forty years, although the Portugals had describ'd her to me as much older. She was cloth'd, or rather girded at the waist, with a plain piece of thick white Cotton, and bare-foot, which is the custom of the Indian Gentile Women, both high and low, in the house and abroad; and of Men too the most, and all the most ordinary, go unshod; some of the more grand wear Sandals, or Slippers; very few use whole Shoes covering all the Foot. From the waist upwards the Queen was naked, saving that she had a cloth ty'd round about her Head, and hanging a little down upon her Breast and Shoulders. In brief, her aspect and habit represented rather a dirty Kitchen-wench, or Laundress, than a delicate and noble Queen; whereupon I said within myself, Behold by whom are routed in India the Armies of the King of Spain, which in Europe is so great a matter! Yet the Queen shew'd her quality much more in speaking than by her presence; for her voice was very graceful in comparison with her Person, and she spoke like a prudent and judicious Woman. They had told me that she had no teeth, and therefore was wont to go with half her Face cover'd; yet I could not discover any such defect in her, either by my Eye, or by my Ear; and I rather believe that this covering of the Mouth, or half the Face, as she sometimes doth, is agreeable to the modest custom which I know to be common to almost all Women in the East. I will not omit to state that though she was so corpulent, as I have mention'd, yet she seems not deform'd, but I imagine she was handsome in her Youth; and, indeed, the Report is that she hath been much of a Lady, of majestic beauty, though stern rather than gentle.

As soon as we saw her coming we stood still, lay'd down our baggage upon the ground and went on one side to leave her the way to pass. Which she taking notice of, and of my strange habit, presently ask'd, Whether there was any among us that could speak the Language? Whereupon my Brachman, Narsu, step'd forth and answer'd, Yes; and I, after I had saluted her according to our manner, went near to speak to her, she standing still in the way with all her people to give us Audience.

She ask'd who I was, (being already inform'd, as one of her Souldiers told me, by a Portugal who was come about his business before me from Mangalor to Manel, that I was come thither to see her), I caus'd my Interpreter to tell her that I was "Un Cavaliero Ponentino", (A Gentleman of the West) who came from very far Countries; and, because other Europeans than Portugals were not usually seen in her Dominions, I caus'd her to be told that I was not a Portugal but a Roman, specifying too that I was not of the Turks of Constantinople, who in all the East are styl'd and known by the Name of Rumu; but a Christian of Rome, where is the See of the Pope

who is the Head of the Christians. That it was almost ten years since my first coming from home and wandering about the world, and seeing divers Countries and Courts of great Princes; and that being mov'd by the fame of her worth, which had long ago come to my Ears, I was come into this place purposely to see her and offer her my service. She ask'd, What Countries and Courts of Princes I had seen? I gave her a brief account of all; and she, hearing the Great Turk, the Persian, the Moghol, and Venk-tapa Naieka nam'd, ask'd, What then I came to see in these Woods of hers? intimating that her State was not worth seeing, after so many other great things as I said I had seen. I reply'd to her that it was enough for me to see her Person, which I knew to be of great worth; for which purpose alone I had taken the pains to come thither, and accounted the same very well imploy'd.

After some courteous words of thanks she ask'd me, If any sickness, or other disaster, had happened to me in so remote and strange Countries, how I could have done, being alone, without any to take care of me? (a tender affection, and natural to the compassion of Women). I answer'd that in every place I went into I had God with me, and that I trusted in him. She ask'd me, Whether I left my Country upon any disgust, the death of any kindred, or beloved person, and therefore wander'd so about the world, (for in India and all the East some are wont to do so upon discontents, either of Love, or for the death of some dear persons, or for other unfortunate accidents; and, if Gentiles, they become Gioglues, if Mahometans, Dervisci and Abdali; all which are a sort of vagabonds, or despisers of the world, going almost naked, onely with a skin upon their Shoulders and a staff in their Hands, through divers Countries, like our Pilgrims; living upon Alms, little caring what befalls them, and leading a Life suitable to the bad disposition of their hearts). I conceal'd my first misfortunes, and told the Queen that I left not my Country upon any such cause, but onely out of a desire to see divers Countries and customs, and to learn many things which are learnt by travelling the World; men who had seen and convers'd with many several Nations being much esteem'd in our parts; that indeed for some time since, upon the death of my Wife whom I lov'd much though I were not in habit, yet in mind I was more than a Gioghi and little car'd what could betide me in the World. She ask'd me, what my design was now, and whither I directed my way? I answer'd that I thought of returning to my Country, if it should please God to give me life to arrive there. Many other questions she ask'd, which I do not now remember, talking with me, standing, a good while; to all which I answer'd the best I could. At length she bid me go and lodge in some house, and afterwards she would talk with me again at more convenience. Whereupon I took my leave, and she proceeded on her way, and, as I was afterwards told, she went about a mile off to see a work which she had in hand of certain Trenches to convey water to certain places whereby to improve them. I spoke to the Queen with my head uncover'd all the while; which courtesie, it being my custom to use it to all Ladies my equals, onely upon account of being such, I thought ought much rather to be us'd to this one who was a Queen and in her own Dominions, where I was come to visit her and to do her Honour.

[A MEETING WITH KING OF OLALA]

- December the fifth. The Queen of Olala's Son, who, though he govern not, (for the Mother administers all alone, and will do so as long as she lives) yet for honor's sake is styl'd King, and call'd Celuua Rairu, (of which words Celuua is his proper name, and Rairu his title) sent for the Brachman, my Interpreter, in the Morning, and, discoursing long with him, made particular inquiry about me, telling him that he understood I was much whiter than the Portugals who

us'd to trade in that Country and of a very good presence and consequently must needs be a person of quality. In conclusion he bid him bring me to him when my convenience serv'd; for he was very desirous to see me and speak with me. This Message being related to me, I let pass the hour of dinner, (because, having no appetite and finding my stomack heavy, I would not dine this day) and, when it seem'd a convenient time, I went (with my Interpreter) cloth'd in black, after my custom; yet not with such wide and long Breeches down to the heels, as the Portugals for the most part are wont to wear in India, in regard of the heat, (for they are very commodious, covering all the Leg and saving the wearing of Stockings, so that the Leg is naked and free) but with Stockings and Garters and ordinary Breeches, without a Cloak, (though it is us'd by the Portugal Souldiers in India, even of greatest quality) but with a large Coat, or Cassock, open at the sides, after the Country fashion.

The Palace, which may rather be call'd Capanna Reale (a Royal Lodge), is entered by a Gate like the grate, or lattice, of our Vine-yards at Rome, ordinary enough, placed in the midst of a field, which like them is divided by a small hedge from the neighbouring fields. Within the Gate is a broad Walk, or Alley, on the right side whereof is a spacious cultivated plot, at the end of which the Walk turns to the right hand, and there, upon the same plot, stands the Royal Mansion, having a prospect over all the said great green field. In the middle of this second turn of the Walk you enter into the House, ascending seven, or eight, wooden stairs, which lead into a large Porch, the length of which is equal to the whole fore-part of the House. This Porch was smeared with cow-dung after their manner, the walls about shining, and being painted with a bad red colour much us'd by them. The fore-part of it, which is all open, is upheld by great square posts, of no great height, for 'tis their custom to make all buildings, especially Porches, low in respect of their breadth and length, with very broad eaves; which is, I believe, by reason of the great heat of the Country, where they have more need of shade and coolness, than of air, or light. Directly opposite to the stairs, in the middle of the Porch, was another small Porch which was the only entrance into the inner part of the building.

Within the little Porch was a small room, long and narrow, where the King sate near the wall on the left side; and he sate upon the ground after the Eastern manner, upon one of those coarse cloths, which in Persia and Turkie are call'd Kielim and serve for poor people; nor was it large, but onely so much as to contain the Person of the King, the rest of the room being bare, saving that it was smoothed over with Cow-dung. Beside the King, but a little farther on his left hand, sate upon a little mat, sufficient onely to contain him, a Youth of about fifteen, or eighteen, years of age, call'd Bale Rairu, who is his nephew, and is to succeed him, being the Son of his deceased Sister, who was daughter of the present Queen. The Father of this Youth was a neighbouring Gentile Prince, whom they call the King of Cumbia, (or perhaps more correctly, Kunble) call'd by his proper name Ramo-Nato-Ari; of which words Ramo-Nato is the proper name, and Ari the title. They said he was still living, though other at Goa told me afterwards that he was dead. But being this young Bale Rairu was not to succeed his Father, but had Right of Inheritance in Olala, therefore he liv'd not in his Father's Country, but here at Manel with his Grand-mother and his Uncle. None other sate with the King, but three, or four, of his more considerable servants stood in the room, talking with him; and in the great Porch, outside the little one, stood in files on either side other servants of inferior degree, two of whom nearest the entrance fanned the Air with fans of green Taffeta in their Hands, as if to drive away the flyes from the King, or from the entrance, a Ceremony us'd, as I have said elsewhere, by Indian Princes for Grandeur; and they told me the use of a green colour was a ceremony too, and the

proper badge of the King of Olala, for the King of Banghel uses Crimson; other Princes white, as I saw us'd by Venk-tapa Naieka; and others, perhaps, other colours. A small company indeed, and a poor appearance for a King; which call'd to my remembrance those ancient Kings, Latinus, Turnus and Evander, who 'tis likely, were Princes of the same sort.

Such persons as came to speak with the King stood without in the Porch, either on one side, or in the middle of the little Porch; either because the room was very small and not sufficient for many people; or rather, as I believe, for more State. The King was young, not above seventeen years of age, as they told me, yet his aspect showed him to be older; for he was very fat and lusty, as far as I could conjecture of him while sitting, and, besides, he had long hairs of a beard upon his face, which he suffer'd to grow without cutting, though they appeared to be but the first down. In complexion he was dusky, not black, as his Mother is, but rather of an earthy colour, as almost all the Malabaris generally are. He had a louder and bigger voice than Youths of his age use to have, and in his speaking, gestures and all other things he shew'd Judgement and manly gravity. From the girdle upwards he was all naked, saving that he had a thin cloth painted with several colours cast across his shoulders. The hair of his head was long after their manner, and ty'd in one great knot, which hung on one side wrapt up in a little plain piece of linnen, which looked like a night-cap fallen on one side. From the girdle downwards I saw not what he wore, because he never rose from his seat, and the Chamber was somewhat dark; besides that the painted cloth on his shoulders hung down very low. His Nephew who sate beside him was not naked, but clad in a wholly white garment; and his Head was wrapt up in a greater fold of white cloth, like a little Turban.

- When I came before the King his Men made me come near to the little Porch in the midst of them, where standing by myself, after the first salutations, the King presently bid me cover my head; which I forthwith did without further intreaty; though with his Mother, being a Lady, I was willing to superabound in Courtesie, speaking to her all the time uncover'd. But with the Son, who was a Man, I was minded to enjoy the priviledge of my descent, and to receive the favour which he did me as due to my quality. At first they offer'd me nothing to sit upon, nor was it fitting to sit down upon the bare ground. Yet, to shew some difference between my self and the bystanders, after I had put on my Hat I lean'd upon my Sword and so talk'd as long as I was standing, which was not long, the King, who at first sat side-wise, turning himself directly towards me, although by so doing he turn'd his back to his Nephew. He ask'd me almost all the same questions as his Mother had done; Whence I came? What Countries I had travell'd through? What Princes I had seen? Whether I had left my own Country upon any misfortune? Or why? How I would have done thus alone in strange Countries, in case of sickness or other accidents? To all which I answer'd as I had done to his Mother; and upon my saying that I wander'd thus alone, up and down, trusting in the help of God, he ask'd me, Who was my God? to all which I answer'd him, (pointing upwards) "The God of heaven, the Creator of the Universe"

[CONVERSATION WITH THE KING, AND A MEAL]

I told him I was sorry I had nothing worthy to present to him; that in my Country there wanted not gallant things for his Highness; but, it being so many years since my departure thence, and my Travels extending so far, I had nothing left as I desir'd; yet, as a memorial of my service, I should venture to give him a small trifle from my Country. Whereupon I caus'd my

Interpreter, who carried it, to offer him a little Map of the World which I had brought with me out of Italy; telling him what it was, and how all the Countries, Lands, Seas and Islands of the world were exactly delineated in it, with their Names set to each place in our Tongue, and all that was necessary to make him understand what it was. The King was greatly pleas'd with it and desir'd to see several Countries, where they lay, and how great they were, asking me sundry questions about them; but, being he understood not our letters written therein, he satisfi'd himself with the sight onely and with shewing it to all the by-standers as a curious and ingenious Work of Art. Then he ask'd me whether I could eat in their Houses, or of their meats; for he desir'd to give me something to eat. I answer'd that I could, and that the purity of our Religion consisted not in the eating, or touching, of things, but in doing good works. He earnestly desir'd of me that I would stay a while till some meat were prepar'd for me; for by all means he would have me eat something in his House, and would himself see me eating. I told him that, if his intention were onely to give me meat, the time was already past, nor was I dispos'd to eat; but if it were to see me eat, I could not eat in that place after the fashion of my Country, not having there the preparations necessary thereunto, so that his Highness would not see what, perhaps, he desir'd; and therefore I besought him to excuse me. Nevertheless he was so urgent for it, that not to appear discourteous, I consented to obey him. And, till the meat came, the King commanded some of his Servants to conduct me to sit down by them in the Porch, where I might sit after our manner, but not in the King's sight.

Entering in this manner and saluting the King as I pass'd I went to sit down at the upper end of the Chamber, (as 'tis above describ'd) where they had prepar'd a little square board of the bigness of an ordinary stool, which might serve for a single person, but rais'd no more than four fingers above the ground; upon this I sat down, crossing my Legs one over the other; and that little elevation help'd me to keep them out from under me, with such decency as I desir'd. Right before the seat, upon the bare floor, (the Indians not using any Tables) they had spread, instead of a dish, (as their custom is, especially with us Christians, with whom they will not defile their own vessels; it not being lawful for them ever to eat again in those wherein we have eaten) a great Leaf of that Tree which the Arabians and Persians call Mous, the Protugals in India Fichi d' India, Indian Fig-trees; and upon the said Leaf they had lay'd a good quantity of Rice, boyl'd, after their manner, onely with water and salt; but for sauce to it there stood on one side a little vessel made of Palm-leaves, full of very good butter melted. There lay also upon another leaf one of those Indian Figgs, clean and pared; and hard by it a quantity of a certain red herb, commonly eaten in India, and call'd by the Protugals Bredo, (which yet is the general appellation of all sort of herbs). In another place lay several fruits us'd by them, and, amongst the rest, slices of the Bambu, or great Indian, Cane; all of them preserv'd in no bad manner, which they call Acciao, besides one sort pickled with Vinegar, as our Olives are. Bread there was none, because they use none but the Rice is instead of it; which was no great defect to me, because I am now accustom'd to do without it, and eat very little. The King very earnestly pray'd me to eat, excusing himself often that he gave me so small an entertainment on the sudden; for if he had known my coming beforehand he would have prepar'd many Carils and divers other more pleasing meats.

Caril is a name which in India they give to certain Broths made with Butter, the Pulp of Indian Nuts, (instead of which in our Countries Almond Milk may be us'd, being equally good and of the same virtue) and all sorts of Spices, particularly Cardamoms and Ginger, (which we use but little) besides herbs, fruits and a thousand other condiments. The Christians, who eat

everything, add Flesh, or Fish, of all sorts, especially Hens, or Chickens, cut in small pieces, sometimes Eggs, which, without doubt, make it more savory: with all which things is made a kind of Broth, like our Guasetti, or Pottages, and it may be made in many several ways; this Broth, with all the above said ingredients, is afterwards poured in good quantity upon the boyled Rice, whereby is made a well-tasted mixture, of much substance and light digestion, as also with very little pains; for it is quickly boyled, and serves both for meat and bread together. I found it very good for me, and used it often, as also the Pilao elsewhere spoken of, and made of Rice and butter boyled with it and flesh fryed therein, besides a thousand other preparations of several sorts which are so common to everybody in Asia; and I account it one of the best and wholesomest meats that can be eaten in the world, without so many Artificial Inventions as our gutlings of Europe (with all procuring to themselves a thousand infirmities of Gouts, Catarrhs and other Maladies, little known to the Orientals) daily devise to the publick damage.

In sort the King frequently urg'd me to eat of the Rice, and I as often refused with several excuses; at last he was so importunate that I was fain to tell him I could not eat that meat in that manner because I had not my Instruments. The King told me I might eat after my own way and take what Instruments I would, which should be fetch'd from my House. I reply'd divers times that there was no need, and that my tasting of it was enough to testifie my obedience. However by all means he would have what was necessary fetch'd from my House. So I sent my Brachman and my Christian Servant with my key, and they, the King so enjoying, went and return'd in a moment, for my House was directly over against the Palace. They brought me a spoon, a silver fork and a clean and fine napkin, very handsomely folded in small plaits; this I spread upon my knees which it cover'd down to my feet, and so I began to eat Rice, pouring the butter upon it with a spoon, and the other things with the fork, after a very cleanly manner, without greasing my self, or touching any thing with my Hands, as 'tis my custom. The King and all the rest admir'd these exquisite, and to them unusual, modes; crying out with wonder Deuru, Deuru, that I was a Deuru, that is a great Man, a God, as they speak. I told the King that for eating according to my custom there needed much preparation of a table, linnen, plates, dishes, cups and other things; but I was now travelling through strange Countries, and treated my self "alla Soldatesca", after the Souldiers' fashion, leading the life of a Gioghi, and consequently had not with me such things as were necessary. The King answer'd that it suffic'd him to see thus much, since thereby he easily imagin'd how all my other things would be, and that, in brief, he had never seen any European like me, and that it was a great contentment to him to see me. He desir'd me several times to eat more, perceiving that I rather tasted of things to please him than to satiate my self. He caus'd divers other Fruits, pickled with Vingar and Salt, to be brought me by a Woman who came from the inner rooms through the little Court; as also for my drink (in a cup made likewise of Palm-leaves) a kind of warm Milk, to which they are accustom'd, and which seem'd to me very good.

Both before and after and whilst I was eating I had much discourse with the King, who entertain'd me, sitting there, above two long hours; but, not remembring it all, I shall onely set down some of the most remarkable particulars. He ask'd me concerning our Countries, all the Christian Princes, with the other Moors and Pagan Princes whom I had seen; concerning the power and Armies of each and their Grandeur in comparison of others. On which occasion I told him that amongst us Christians the prime Prince was the Pope, my Lord, the Head of the Church and the High-Priest, to whom all others gave Obedience; the next was the Emperor, in dignity the first of Souldiers, or secular Princes; that the first Nation was France; and that for

Territory and Riches Spain had most of all; with many other circumstances too long to be rehearsed. Which discourse led me to tell him, that is the King o f Spain, so much esteem'd in India, pay'd Tribute to our Lord the Pope for the Kingdom of Naples, which he held of His Holiness in homage; for which he had a great conceit of the Pope.

As for the Ceremonies of eating, I must not omit to say that after he saw that I had done eating, notwith-standing his many instances to me to eat more, he was contented that I should make an end; and because most of the meat remained untouch'd, and it was not lawful for them to touch it, or keep it in the House, they caused my Christian Servant to come in and carry it all away (that he might eat it); which he did in the napkin which I had us'd before; for to fling it away, in regard of the discourtesie it would be to me, they judged not convenient. At length, when I rose up from my seat and took leave of the King, they caused my said Servant to strew a little Cow-dung, (which they had got ready for the purpose) upon the place where I had sat, which, according to their Religion, was to be purified. In the mean time, as I was taking leave of the King, he caused to be presented to me, (for they were ready prepared in the Chamber) and delivered to my Servants to carry home, four Lagne, (so they in India, especially the Portugals, call the Indian Nuts before they be ripe, when) instead of Pulp, they contain a sweet refreshing water which is drunk for delight; and if the Pulp (for of this water it is made) be begun to be congealed yet that little is very tender and is eaten with much delight and is accounted cooling; whereas when it is hard and fully congealed, the Nut, remaining without water within and in the inner part somewhat empty, that matter of the Nut which is used more for sauce than to eat alone is, in my opinion, heating, and not of so good taste as before when it was more tender). Of these Lagne he caus'd four to be given me, besides I know not how many great bunches of Moul, or Indian Figs, which, though a small matter, are nevertheless the delights of this Country; wherefore as such I received them, and, thanking the King for them, (who also thank'd me much for my visit, testifying several times that he had had very great contentment in seeing me) at length taking my leave I departed about an hour, or little more, before night.

2. JESUIT NARRATION OF MANNERS AND CUSTOMS IN SOUTH INDIA

(Madurai Jesuit Province Archives, Shembaganur, Kodaikanal-624 104) (Emmaneul MARTINS (translated) to Provincial;14.10.1626,vol 36:pp12-34 extract pp 12-24)

Generally speaking the houses are built with clay and covered with straw. None the less they have sumptuous temples with superb architecture. The costume of non-brahmins consists in a large cloth which covers them quite decently. It is the manner of wearing it and in its fine texture, and cleanliness that its beauty and elegance are seen.

Usually they left their hair grow and they tie it with great art. They usually bind round their head a cloth of fine linen. The Kings and other great lords and noblemen wear also occasionally a cabaya (long tunic) and instead of white linen, rich silk cloth....

They generally go barefooted specially at home, but when they travel they wear sandals. ...

The trials and the formalities which precede them are verbal, not written, for disputes are rapidly settled, either by having recourse to arbiters or sometimes to oaths. In the latter case they proceed as follows: If a man has been killed, wounded or robbed, and the culprit is not known, those who are suspected and even those who cannot reasonably be suspected are called by the magistrate or to be more exact the plantiff himself, arrests all those he pleases. By the town governor's order, they go to the temple of their idols where they bring a vessel full of boiling butter, and all put their fingers in it, he who gets burnt receives the punishment and pays a fine, according to the nature of the accusation or of the crime.

Another kind of trial, not very different from the other consists in taking an oath without putting one's hand in the boiling butter. But after the oath is taken those who are suspected are watched with the greatest attention. ...

That fourth caste (cultivators and artisans) which is very numerous includes many varieties and distinctions. First of all now-a-days, the kings and the governors belong to that caste, and there are very few of the Rajah caste, who consequently are those who wage war as officers or soldiers. In that fourth caste the first place is given to the Vellalas, the others while still remaining in the group of pure castes, are less and less noble as we go down the ladder, till we come to the low caste which become lower and lower. ... When a low caste man is met on the road people are careful not to pass near him, the Brahmins won't allow him to approach their persons.

Father R. de Nobili and a few years later Father A. Vico changed their dress to conform themselves to the customs of the highest caste, which as I said is that of Brahmins....

Non-brahmins are less scruplous, they eat flesh and fish, they only refrain from eating beef. To kill a cow is the greatest or one of the greatest sins among them. They do not consider a sin to kill themselves, on the contrary it is a great work of mercy....

Regarding letters, they are above all proficient in Sanskrit (their Latin which they call Grantham). They excel in rhetoric, are well versed in poetry which is most varied, and artificial, and all throughout their lives, they do not treat of anything else.... All their books are in verse and it cannot be denied that they are full of very ingenious sayings and maxims, though really they are all about fables.

Their philosophy is more or less the same as that of our ancient philosophers.... There are sects which do not recognise the vedas. Those sects differ also in their manner of speaking of the deity… They do not admit the creation out of nothing, but on the contrary they hold as a first principle, that out of nothing, nothing can be made....

We must note here that it is the custom in this country that in the visits which lords pay to one another, their servants, if they are well educated and able to carry on a conversation speak as much as their masters who open the conversation.

3. ON TEMPLES AT PALIACATA AND AT TIRUPATI c. 1650

[Abraham Roger: La parte Ouverte.. [The Open Door through Which to Attain Knowledge of Hidden Paganism] in French from Dutch, Thomas La Grue, Amsterdam, 1670. The book has never been published in English. This is translated from chapter 10 page 210, 228]

What the Brahmins think of Their Temples (ie Their Estimation of Their Temples) ?

One can judge in what great esteem they hold their temples if one takes into account how generous they are and how gladly they contribute for the upkeep of their temples and the latter's personnel. A certain percentage of all taxes on goods which are bought and sold is given to the temples. Of the imports coming by sea such as sandalwood, benjuyn and long pepper the tax is 5 Pagodas per Baer which is 480 pounds (Pagoda is the name of a coin called so because it has the image of an idol stamped on it. A Pagoda is equal to 4 pounds and 4 shillings of Dutch currency.) Of these 5 Pagodas, the two big temples receive 2 Fanums (=ca. 7 shillings) and the other five temples (tirupalawaram, Colour, Calahast, Tiruwetoru, Tricketjegoundam) receive 5/8 of a Fanum (3.5 shillings). Red copper, yellow copper; steel, walnuts, catclamon, camphor of Supon, Gansa, sulphur, wax, pepper, Chinese root, spiantes (==pewter ?) yield a tax of four Pagodas and three Fanums per baer. The Governor or Duan of the town of Paliacata has to give from this amount two Fanums to the two temples of the city, ie Adinarainam-pieremalu, and Someswara; and to the five temples in the country-side, cited above, 5/8 of a Fanum. Quick silver, vermillion, inge (?), and silk yield a tax of 20 Pagodas per baer. Out of this amount the governor is obliged to give 13 3/4 Fanums to the two temples of the city, and 3/4 for the five temples of the region 8 fanams and for two Brahmins 3/4 of a Fanum.

When the governor receives 1.5 Pagodas he must give 3/4 of a Pagoda to three Brahmins. . .

The different families (ie castes) also present annually a certain sum of money: the Sittus have to give for the annual festival of Vishnu 25 Pagodas, for the festival of Iswara 33 pagodas and for the festival of the temple dedicated to Ganga 25 Pagodas, whereas the Comitus have to pay 9 Pagodas for Vishnu, 10 Pagodas for Iswara and 7 for Ganga. The oil-pressers have to give annually to the Ganga as much oil as is needed. The fishermen called patnouas give 8 Fanums for Ganga. The fishermen named Sembroua give 8 Fanums for Ganga, the fisherman named Correaor Macoa who live at Beirecoupan near Paliacatta, pay the annual sum of 5 Fanums for Ganga, whereas the Carrea who dwell in the city pay 6 Fanums. The surveyors of the governor pay 5 Fanums, the washermen 11 Fanums. This is sufficient evidence of the the high esteem in which they hold their temples. What is true of Palliacatta is true for the whole country. Furthermore, on the feast days of important temples whole crowds come to pay their respects to the respective temple and offer generous gifts to the temple. At a few days distance from Palliacatta, there is very famous temple of Tripeti which celebrates three important festivals per year : one in September (at which great multitudes assemble–especially Sudras from all parts, bringing gifts), the second is in December (an assembly mostly of Brahmins), I am not sure of the time of the third festival. Due to all these pilgrims and from other sources one reckons that Tripeti has a total revenue of 60, 70 or 80,000 Pagodas. The Brahmin Padmanaba [Roger's informant] says that previously Tripeti was even richer which was due to the donations made by the kings who, in olden days, were more religiously inclined. Now, it is quite the opposite, for the king Weincatapeti, who was in need of money; took money from the temple's treasury,

but he made a vow to repay the temple as soon as the kingdom fared better. But he was succeeded by the king Ramadewel, who being very greedy, not only did not carry out his predecessors vow, but even robbed the temple of all its precious jewels for his own enrichment (taking also the crown of rubies and diamonds from the head of the idol). However, the councillors of the king who had advised him to act in this way were soon to meet their end at the foot of the mountain where this temple is situated. The same fate was destined for the king too.

Mention of a festival, Anarta Padmanaba Uratam during which the Sudras join together with the Brahmins, the latter tie a piece of string round the former's arm and perform a certain retual. In return the Brahmin receives a Danam, that is alms which consist of fruit, rice or money.

4. MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE HINDUS (c. 1753)

Oxford :Bodleian : MS Deuce 328: 46 pages (ff 23): dated : Bombay 20 Nov 1753: signed Alex Knox: addressed to David Doig, Lord Provost of Montrose.

But they universally abstain from the flesh of oxen or cows, whom they rank at the head of the brute creation.

As I observed before, their marriages are all conducted by the parents during the parties infancy, the expence of this ceremoney, which is considerable according to the ranks of the persons married, is always from the bridegroom's family, nor is it customary to give any fortunes with their daughters, because it should not be said they were obliged to buy them husbands, for this custom it seems they despise the Europeans very much.

They have peculiar months; in which only they allow the consummation of marriages. In these months what with illuminations, singers, dancer and horrid musick, one would imagine the days and nights reversed for they never begin the entertainment before it is dark, nor conclude them while that favours the demonstration of their fireworks. All this time, the bride and bridegroom richly dres'd, are well mounted on horse back or carried in pallankeens (like a couch, in which there is a mattress and pillows) upon four or six men's shoulders thro the town, accompanied by the relations and friends of both families, preceded by the dancing girls, musicians, singers, with great mumber of massals or links attending them. Previous to this, there are machines of fire erected over against all their friends houses to whom they intend to pay respect, where always they stop, and are entertained by the dancers. And during the exhibition of the fireworks, throughout the whole procession the bride and bridegroom are incessantly employed threwing flowers at one another, of which the servants carry basketsful for that purpose. Though these ceremonies are not finished in less than six or eight days, yet in regard to their entertainments they never exceed a low sweetmeats and butlenuts, which they use as Europeans do tobacco, but the former is a fine aromatick and in every respect much preferable, at the same time promiscuously sprinkling rose-water and other perfumes amongst their guests.

You would be surprised to think how great a sum the expence of one of their better sort of marriages will amount to. I saw one my last voyage at Bengall, which I was well informed could not cost less than ten or twelve thousand pounds sterling, and one since I have been in Bombay that amounted to about one third of that sum.

As they have so steadfast a belief in transmigration and their women not being permitted to marry a second husband, even the the first should die in her nonage. I say from the consideration and hardships upon the tender sex, we may be enabled in some measure to account for the great fortitude and unmatched resolution of the wives burning with the bodies of their dead husbands, which instead of being obliged to, by the laws of their country, as some people have suggested, great entreaties and arguments one generally made use of, to break their resolution, but seldom to any purpose. It is certain that after they have determined to burn and the Brahmins have performed the ceremonies for that occasion, should they then attempt to retract, their friends and relations would assist to throw them into the flames.

Sometimes since a young creature at Bengall embraced this resolution, she was known by many of the European ladies there, who kindly visited her, in her distress, and endeavured to move her desperate design by the most influencing reasons they could offer, as she had two very fine children, they represented to her the hardships and difficulties they would be liable to, when destitute of both parents, nor were her own relations and those of her husband less assiduous with their persuasions; however nothing could stagger her fixed determination.

The day she was to burn being arrived many gentlemen attended her to the pile with several Bramins &c.

The Bramins after praying with her for a considerable time, annointed her head and hair, all the while muttering some unintelligible sentences; afterwards they walked round the pile with her three times, constantly singing out their prayers. Having thus ended the ceremony, she takes off her bracelets, earrings &c and distributes them amongst her relations who attend her. Then embracing them she took her leave very pleasantly and retired to the middle of the pile, where her dead husband lay, and having placed herself at his feet, the Bramin gave a lighted match into her hand. With joy in her countenance she received it and said "this night I shall enjoy my husband's company in another form", then immediately set fire to the pile, but observing that she done it on the leeward side, she turned round and lighted it in several places to windward.

The gentlemen's curiosity led them as near to the pile as the flames would admit them, yet they never heard her utter the least moan. The laws of the country do not oblige the women to this cruel custom yet in private it is certainly encouraged among them, for it is a great honour to the whole family, and the children of the woman who burns are always much regarded and very well matched.

5. ANCIENT MANNERS OF THE INDIAN STILL EXISTING IN BISSENPOUR

from RAYNAL, Abbe C.T.F: A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies, newly translated by JO Justamond, FRS, (6 vol. 1798). This extract is from volume I, pp 398-402. This work seems to have been first published in the original French in 1770, and in an English translation by Justamond in 1776. There is a second edition in English in 1776 itself, and further editions in 1777, 1779,1783, and the above revised edition in 1798. The editions in the original French in the British Museum are those of 1770, 1774, 1775, 1780,1781, 1783.

DURING ALL these commotions, despotic government, which unhappily prevails throughout India, kept up its influence in Bengal; though a small district in the province that had preserved its independence, still continues to maintain it. This fortunate spot, which extends about a hundred and sixty miles is called Bissenpour. It has been governed, from time immemorial, by a Bramin family of the tribe of Rajahputs. Here it is that the purity and equity of the ancient political system of the Indians is found unadulterated. This singular kind of government, the most beautiful and most interesting monument in the world, has hitherto been beholden with too much indifference. The only remains we have of ancient nations consist in monuments of brass and marble, which speak only to the imagination and to opinion, uncertain interpreters of manners and customs that no longer exist. Were a philosopher transported to Bissenpour, he would immediately be a witness of the life led by the first inhabitants of India many thousand years ago; he would converse with them; he would trace the progress of the nation, celebrated as it were from its very infancy; he would see the rise of a government, which being founded only on happy prejudices, on a simplicity and purity of manners, on the mildness of the people, and the integrity of the chiefs, has survived those innumerable systems of legislation, which have made only a transitory appearance upon the stage of the world with the generations they were destined to torment. More solid and durable than those political structures, which raised by imposture and enthusiasm , are the scourges of mankind, and are doomed to perish with the extravagant opinions that gave them birth, the government of Bissenpour, the offspring of a just attention to order and the laws of nature, has been established and maintained upon unchangeable principles, and has undergone no more alteration than those principles themselves. The singular situations of this country has preserved to the inhabitants their primitive happiness and the gentleness of their character, by securing them from the danger of being conquered, or of imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellow-creatures. Nature has surrounded them with water; and they have only to open the sluices of their rivers in order to overflow the whole country. The armies sent to subdue them have so frequently been drowned, that the plan of enslaving them has been laid aside; and the projectors of it have thought proper to content themselves with an appearance of submission.

Liberty and property are sacred in Bissenpour. Robbery, either public or private, is never heard of. As soon as any stranger enters the territory he comes under the protection of the laws, which provide for his security. He is furnished with guides at free cost, who conduct him from place to place, and are answerable for his person and effects. When he changes his conductors, the new ones deliver to those they relieve an attestation of their conduct, which is registered and afterwards sent to the Raja. All the time he remains in the country he is maintained and conveyed with his merchandise, at the expence of the state, unless he desires leave to stay longer then three days in the same place. In that case he is obliged to defray his own expence,

unless he is detained by any illness or other unavoidable accident. This beneficence to strangers is the consequence of the warmth with which the citizens espouse each other's interests. They are so far from entertaining a thought of doing an injury to each other, that whoever finds a purse, or other thing of value, hangs it upon the first tree he m eets with, and informs the nearest guard, who give notice of it to the public by beat of drum. These maxims of probity are so generally received, that they direct even the operations of government. It receives annually between seven and eight millions (from 291, 666l13s.4d. to 333,333l6s.8d.), with out injury to agriculture or trade, and what is not wanted of this sum to supply the unavoidable expence of the state is laid out in improvements. The Raja is enabled to engage in these human employments, as he pays the Mogul only what tribute he thinks proper, and at the times he chooses.

Readers, whose feeling hearts have been transported with joy at this description of the simplicity of the manners and of the government of Bissenpour! you, who, tired with the vices and disorders prevailing in your own country, have undoubtedly frequently left it in imagination, in order to behold the virtue, and share the happiness, of this little corner of Bengal, it is with regret that I am now going to destroy, perhaps, this most agreeable illusion, and pour the bitter cup of melancholy in your hearts; but truth compels me. Alas! this Bissenpour, and all that I have been saying about it, is, perhaps , nothing more than a fable

I understand - with sorrow you explain; A fable. What ! is there nothing but the evil that can be said of man, that is possible to be -------------* [The following three paragraphs were added after the edition of 1776] true? His misery or his wretchedness, are they the only circumstances that are incontestible? This being, born as he is for virtue, the principle of which he would in vain attempt to stifle, which he never counteracts without remorse, and which he is obliged to respect, even when it distresses or humiliates him; notwithstanding all these circumstance, this being is prone to wickedness, in every part of the globe. He is incessantly panting after happiness founded upon that basis of his real duties, and yet he is unhappy everywhere. Everywhere he groans under the yoke of merciless rulers: everywhere he torments his equals, or is tormented by them; everywhere he is corrupted by education, and poisoned from his birth by prejudice; everywhere he is devoured by ambition, agitated with the love of glory, or tormented with the thirst of gold; while we are the sad victims of these fell executioners, who pursue us to the verge of the grave. Has vice then extended itself over the whole earth? Alas! let innocence be suffered at least to remain in this narrow spot, upon which our attention is fixed; and which our imagination carrying us over the immense space that is between us, delighted to dwell upon.

Reader, I have experienced the same anxiety that you have. I have been led into the same reflections, when I found myself balanced between two authorities, almost of equal weight; the one for, the other against, the existence of Bissenpour. We have in our favour the testimony of an English traveller, who has resided thirty years in Bengal. The testimony on the other side is also that of a traveller of the same nation, who has likewise lived for a considerable time in this country. Consider the matter, and make your own choice.

Although the rest of Bengal be far from enjoying the same felicity, be it real or fabulous, as Bissenpour, it is nevertheless the richest and most populous province in the whole empire....

6. ON GOMUKH AND INDIAN CUSTOMS AND MANNERS c. 1774

Colonel Macleane to Prime Minister Lord North, Calcutta 9.12.1774: NLS: MINTO PAPERS: EFP 10, 13 pp in bound Volume

But there is a place really called the Cow's Mouth situated about 200 miles further north among the hills, and the principal of the three rivers is much resorted to by the Jentoos [Hindus] for religious purposes....I cannot give your Lordship a stronger proof of the tranquility attending Jentoo principles and manners than the security which strangers find in travelling through their country though ignorant of their form of government and language. I myself passed without attendants or escort in the midst of the campaign from Benares to Lolldong (600 miles) without having had the smallest insult offered to me. ..Is it not my Lord very extraordinary that a country the most distant part of which is not above 200 miles north east of Delhy, so easy of access, so well inhabited and civilized should be so little known to our geographers as not to have even the names of their numerous cities and towns expressed in their maps. (Macleane stated that in Jeffery's map Haridwar was marked as Cow's Mouth. Macleane was of special emissary in India and during 1775-77 acted as a mediator between Lord North and Warren Hastings. He appears to have died in 1778 in a ship which was lost at sea.)

7. ALL QUIET HAPPY AND REGULAR AMONG THE MARHATTAS c.1770

Dow's dissertation is reproduced in the book `Legislation Crientale...' by Anquetil Duperron published 1778. page 232

When their armies carry destruction and death into the territories of Mahommedans, all is quiet, happy and regular at home. No robbery is to be dreaded, no imposition or obstruction from the officers of government, no protection necessary but the shade. To be a stranger is a sufficient security... This is no ideal picture of happiness. The author of the dissertation, who travelled lately into the country of the Marhattas, avers, from experience, the truth of his observations, But the Mahrattors who have been represented as barbarians, are a great and rising people, subject to a regular government, the principles of which are founded on virtue.

8. A DESCRIPTION OF LIFE IN HYDERABAD 1779

National Library of Scotland: MS.8326: James Stuart Papers (ff.43-46) Letter from Alexander Read, Hyderabad, November 1779. (Extract)

.... We walked all the way, not having far to go, before we met with two or three herds of deer, which had been collected and were confined in a space of about 10 or 12 miles in circumference enclosed by guards of sepoys for keeping them in and keeping off the people.

The dancing girls walked before us. There were about 50 of them, none of them handsome. Five or six musicians followed barking out a mournful dirge, very different from our tallio. Several of the Mulks and daulaps (the great men of the empire) were of the party, but it was difficult to distinguish them from other servants in the lowest capacity, the great difference in their appearance consisting in the cleanliness of their jamahs.

9. WILLIAM HODGES ON THE VARANASI - BIHAR REGION (c.1780)

From William Hodges: Travels in India during the years 1781-1783, London, 1793. William Hodges was one of the leading British painters during the latter part of the 18th century.

UNTIL it becomes tempered by the rains that constantly fall in June and July, it is dreadful to the bearers of the pallankeens to travel in the middle of the day; the dust and heat are then, indeed, so intolerable, that they are frequently under the necessity of putting down their burthens, and sheltering themselves beneath the shade of the banyan trees, many of which are found on the road, particularly by the side of wells, or some little choultry on the borders of a tank. The number of these rural accommodations for travellers reflect the highest credit on the care of the old Hindoo and Moorish governments. It is particularly mentioned in the life of the Emperor Shere Shah, that, although a usurper who obtained the empire by the most atrocious acts, he paid the most humane attention to the comforts and accommodations of his people. He caused wells to be dug at every coss (or two miles), and trees to be planted on the road side. At many of these wells have I halted in my journies. They are, in general, from ten to fourteen feet in diameter, and lined with stone; the masonry excellent; and they are raised from the surface of the ground by a little wall two feet high. I should have remarked that, throughout Bengal and Bahar, the water is excellent. It is extremely pleasant to observe the variety of travellers that are to be met with on the road; either passing along in groups, under the shade of some spreading tree, by the side of the wells or tanks. In one part may be seen the native soldiers, their half pikes sticking by their side, and their shields lying by them, with their sabres and matchlocks; in another part is, perhaps, a company of merchants, engaged in calculation, or of devotees in the act of social worship; and in another, the common Hindoo pallankeen bearers baking their bread. This operation is performed in an easy and expeditious manner by these people; they make a small hole in the earth of about a foot in diameter, in which they light a fire, and on the top of the fire they place a flat iron plate, which they always carry with them, and which they support with stones; they mix their flour with a little water, and bake their cakes, which are soon dressd, are very wholesome, and I think not unpalatable. On the whole , I must say, that the simplicity and primitive appearance of these groups delighted me.

IT is not uncommon also, in excursions through these parts of the country, to meet with various fakirs, with a more than savage appearance. Sometimes whole families may be seen travelling up and down the country, forming most beautiful picturesque groups; sometimes with camels loaded with goods; some of the party riding on bullocks, the females in hackeries, and the younger part of the company on small horses, brought from the mountains bordering the eastern side of Bengal. These horses are called tanyans, and are mostly pye-bald. The men march on foot, armed with spears and matchlocks; their sabres and shields are flung across their backs. These are certainly valuable subjects for the p ainter. The lodgings of the traveller in India are the serais, or caravanserais, (or places for the caravans) as they are called in Europe. Many of these are in the great roads, and have been erected either by charitable persons, or at the public expence. The Emperor, whom I have already mentioned for his attention to the public accommodation, built many, from the extremity of Bengal to Lahore. There is a noble building of this kind remaining at Rajemahel, built by Sultan Sujah, then Subah of Bengal. The form is a square of equal sides; the entrance from the Bengal road is through a large and highly

ornamented gate, which also possesses military strength no less than beauty. Round the four sides is a wall about twenty feet high; attached to the wall round the sides are separate apartments, covered on the top, and open to the center of the area within. In these places the traveller lodges his goods, and sleeps; the area within the square is for the beasts. Attendant on these serais are poor people, who furnish a small bedstead for the traveller to sleep on, and who are rewarded by a trifling sum, amounting to perhaps a penny English. The Mahomedan is, in general, a generous man compared with the Hindoo on these occasions. Opposite the Bengal gate is another in this serai; which, however, is nothing more than merely an opening through the wall.

FROM Mongheir I embarked, and returned by water to Calcutta; and here I had an opportunity to observing a series of scenery perfectly new; the different boats of the country, and the varied shores of the Ganges. This immense current of water suggests rather the idea of an ocean than of a river, the general breadth of it being from two to five miles, and in some places more. The largest boats sailing u p or passing down, appear, when in the middle of the stream, as mere points, and the eastern shore only as a dark line marking the horizon. The rivers I have seen in Europe, even the Rhine, appear as rivulets in comparison with this enormous mass of water. I do not know a more pleasant amusement than sailing down the Ganges in the warm season; the air, passing over the great reaches of the river many miles in length, is so tempered as to feel delightfully refreshing. After sun-set the boats are generally moored close to the banks, where the shore is bold, and near a gunge or market, for the accommodation of the people. It is common, on the banks of the river, to see small Hindoo temples, with gauts or passages, and flights of steps to the river. In the mornings, at or after sun-rise, the women bathe in the river; and the younger part, in particular, continue a considerable time in the water, sporting and playing like Naiads or Syrens. To a painter's mind, the fine antique figures never fail to present themselves, when he observes a beautiful female form ascending these steps from the river, with wet drapery, which perfectly displays the whole person, and with vases on their heads, carrying water to the temples. A sight no less novel or extraordinary, is the Bramins at their oraisons; perfectly abstracted, for the time, to every passing object, however attractive. These devotees are generally naked, except a small piece of drapery round the middle. A surprising spirit of cleanliness is to be observed among the Hindoos; the streets of their villages are commonly swept and watered, and sand is frequently strewed before the doors of the houses. The simplicity, and perfectly modest character, of the Hindoo women, cannot but arrest the attention of a stranger. With downcast eye, and equal step, they proceed along, and scarcely turn to the right or to the left to observe a foreigner as he passes, however new or singular his appearance. The men are no less remarkable for their hospitality, and are constantly attentive to accommodate the traveller in his wants. During the whole of the journey in my pallankeen , whatever I wanted, as boiling water for my tea, milk, eggs, &c &c. I never met with imposition or delay, but always experienced an uncommon readiness to oblige, and that accompanied with manners the most simple and accommodating. In perfect opposition is the Mussulman character; - haughty, not to say insolent; irritable, and ferocious. I beg, however, to be understood of the lower classes; for a Moorish gentleman may be considered as a perfect model of a well bred man. The Hindoos are chiefly husbandmen, manufacturers, and merchants, except two tribes-- the Rajapoots, who are military, and the Bramins, who are ecclesiastics. The Mussulmans may be classed as entirely military, as few of them exercise any other employment, except collecting the revenues, which under the Moorish governments have been always done by military force.

AT this season of the year it is not uncommon, towards the evening, to see a small black cloud rising in the eastern part of the horizon, and afterwards spreading itself to the north-west. This phenomenon is always attended with a violent lightning and heavy thunder, which is followed by rain. These storms sometimes last for half an hour or more; and when they disperse they leave the air greatly freshened, and the sky of a deep, clear, and transparent blue. When they occur near the full moon, the whole atmosphere is illuminated by a soft but brilliant silver light, attended with gentle airs, as Shakespeare has expressed:

"When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees, "And they did make no noise."

PASSING by the city of Moorshedabad, on the evening of Mussulman holiday, I was much entertained to see the river covered with innumerable lights, just floating above the surface of the water. Such an uncommon appearance was, at first, difficult to account for; but I found, upon enquiry, that upon these occasions they fabricate a number of small lamps, which they light and set afloat on the river; the stream constantly running down, they are carried to a considerable distance, and last for many hours. After a passage of a few days from Mongheir, I arrived at Calcutta. Several of the subjects I had collected in my journey were painted for the Honourable the then Governor General; two of them on a large scale, viz. the Falls of Mootejerna, and the Ruins of Rajemahel.

I did not remain long in the capital of Bengal, on my return from Mongheir, before a new opportunity was presented to me of again indulging the curiosity which I felt both as an artist and a man, to enlarge my acquaintance with a country so fertile in the beauties of nature at least. It being determined by the Bengal Government that it was expedient, for the public utility that the governor General should make a tour through a part of the country, Mr.Hastings, with that liberality and attention to the arts which has ever characterized his conduct, acceded to my request, and permitted me to accompany him.

On the 25th of June, 1781, therefore, I embarked in a budgerow for this expedition. The periodical rains had now commenced, and every natural object presented a new face, with such a freshness of verdure, and with such vigour and fulness of foliage, that all nature appeared in the utmost luxuriance. From the number of gentlemen who necessarily attended the Governor General, the fleet was very large, and consisted of every variety of the boats of the country, except those which are called burs, and of which we met with several in our course. These vessels are large rude barks, the sides of which are raised very high, and sewed together with the fibres of the coconut tree. They have only a single mast, with a large square sail, and the bottoms of them are nearly flat. They take in a great quantity of water from their sides and bottoms, which compels the crew to employ some people continually in bailing. They are used for the carriage of cotton, and other very bulky materials, the weight of which cannot bear any proportion to their size. Indeed, it would be impracticable to employ boats which were calculated to draw any considerable quantity of water on this river, as the navigation is extremely dangerous, from the sands being constantly shifting. I have known an island, four miles in length, and containing some villages, wholly swept away in one season; in the mean time, at a little distance, other islands were formed, from the sands being thrown up. This phenomenon took place off the point of Rajemahel, in the year 1782.

THE boats used by the natives for travelling, and also by Europeans, are the budgerows, which both sail and row; they have in general from twelve to twenty oars. These boats vary in their size according to the condition of their owners; some may be about sixty feet in length, having very high sterns; many of them twelve feet from the water's edge, and quite sharp at the upper point: in the center they are broad, having a considerable bearing in the water, and quite sharp forward. They are steered with a large paddle or oar, extending ten feet from the stern; and there is generally one mast in the center, on which is hoisted a large square sail: they have likewise a topmast, on which is a square sail for fine weather. These boats are ill calculated to go near the wind, and indeed are dangerous from the great weight abast; they are, however, extremely commodious, having in the center a small verander, or open portico, opening by a door into a handsome room, lighted by a range of windows on each side. This is the dining or sitting room, within which is a convenient bed chamber, generally containing a small closet; the height of the sitting room is usually from seven to nine feet. Besides that boat, a gentleman is usually attended by two others; a pulwah, for the accommodation of the kitchen, and a smaller boat, a paunchway, which is destined to convey him either on shore or on board, as it frequently happens that the budgerow cannot come close to the shores, where he might wish to land. These boats sail more expeditiously than the budgerows; but the paunchway are nearly of the same general construction, with this difference, that the greatest breadth is somewhat farther aft, and the sterns lower; the pulwahs are a broad boat, and not so sharp forward or aft as the other two. The English gentlemen have made great improvements on the budgerow in Bengal, by introducing a broad flat floor, square sterns, and broad bows. These boats are much safer, sail near and keep their wind, and there is no danger attending their taking the ground; they are, besides, calculated for carrying a greater quantity of sail. Another boat of this country, which is very curiously constructed, is called a Moor-punky: these are very long and narrow, sometimes extending to upwards of an hundred feet in length, and not more than eight feet in breadth; they are always paddled, sometimes by forty men, and are steered by a large paddle from the stern, which rises either in the shape of a peacock, a snake, or some other animal. The persons employed to paddle are directed by a man who stands up, and sometimes he makes use of a branch of a plant to direct their motions. In one part of the stern is a canopy supported by p illars, in which are seated the owner and his friends, who partake together of the refreshing breezes of the evening. These boats are very expensive, owing to the beautiful decorations of painted and gilt ornaments, which are highly varnished, and exhibit a very considerable degree of taste.

10. A MARHATTA BRAHMIN AMBASSADOR EXPLAINS HINDU MANNERS AND CUSTOMS IN LONDON c. 1780

House of Commons papers: 1781, pp.39-40

There being at this time a Bramin in England, who is a subject of a Gentoo Government, Your Committee judging it to be the most authentic source of information, concerning the Usages and Religion of the Hindoos, requested his attendance; and the particulars of his examination being interpreted by Charles William Boughton Rouse, Esquire, a Member of Your Committee, are- That his Name is Honwontrow: That he comes from Poonah, a Gentoo Government, of which Sittarah is the Capital. That it is governed by the Peshwah, who is a bramin. That he is come to England on the part of Ragenaut Row, with letters to the king, and the East India Company. That he is a Bramin, that his cast, as well as all others, is obliged to observe particular Rules and Models of Life. That the Object of worship is alike to all casts; but that there are many sects and distinctions, each of which has its peculiar Rules.

That there are Four principal casts; and within these, there are a great many others; and that it is criminal for any Gentoo, to transgress the Rules of his particular cast. That he may lose his cast entirely, or, according to the nature of the offence, it may admit of expiation. Then being asked, whether some of these expiations are not expencive and troublesome? he said without expence and trouble how can, expiation be made? That it would be proportionable to the crime; for instance, Bramhatta, or killing of a bramin; Streehatta, or the killing of a woman; Barhatta, or the killing a child; Gowhatta, or the killing of a Cow; are the four great offences that require the most rigorous expiations, and the degree of Criminality is nearly alike. That he must make one distinction, that it can only be done by consent and direction of learned Bramins. That in case of a rich persons, the expiation is large sums given in charity, if of low condition, long pilgrimages, as far as twelve years, without shoes, and naked feet, would be enjoined.

That by the laws and customs of the Gentoos, a Bramin might possibly commit such a crime, as to incur the punishment of death; for instance wilful murder; but there is one thing, it is not right to hang a Bramin; if he is to be put to death, it should be with a sword. At the same time the witness added, That he never heard of an instance in which, under a Hindoo Government, a Bramin was put to death. Then being asked, whether there is any other crime, besides wilful murder, for which a Bramin can be punished with death? he said, the Prince may take his life for some great breach of trust, or crime against the state; but hanging would not be the punishment- the punishment of death is not inflicted for smaller matters; but what other crimes can merit death!

That hanging is, by the Hindoos, considered as a great pollution; and further, it is the belief of the Hindoos, that a man who suffers death by the sword, has pardon for his offences; but if he dies by the halter, he dies with his sins upon him -- that a Person dying by suicide, or by the halter, cannot have his funeral rites performed, that the body of a hanged Bramin is so polluted, that another will not touch it. And being asked the particular reason? the witness said, how can I tell you the reasons for it? Such is our ancient Religion.

It is a general principle of faith, that an Hindoo should die placed upon the earth. Being asked, whether there are not crimes by which Hindoos may lose their cast? He said, there are; for instance, that he, being a Bramin, could not eat any thing prepared by the hands of the Persee (who was then sitting by him); that if he did, he should lose his cast; and that if he had done it of his own free will, it could not be expiated; that, though a Gentoo, should have resisted, if he be forced violently into an act of impurity, it will rest with the learned Bramins, whether to restore him to his cast again, or not? That they can do nothing in it, but by the order of the Shaster. That they can eat only the things that are permitted them by the rules of their cast; that he has heard, the bramins of the Canooge eat some kinds of flesh; but that if the Bramins in his country eat meat, they would lose their cast. That a Bramin cannot eat his food, unless prepared by another Bramin; that if he should eat food drest by a person of another cast, it would be an impunity. That indulgencies would be allowed to persons under an extreme illness, or such hunger as might take away power of judgement; but that if he should only be hungry, and had the power of distinguishing persons, no deviation from rule would be allowed.

Being asked, Whether there are any distinctions as to vessels or places of cookery; he said, there are; that for instance, he could not dress his food at the fire in the room where he was then sitting, nor could he dress it in borrowed vessels, nor could he dress it upon a wooden floor, but if there was a span of Earth upon the floor, he might. That if a man of another cast, or of no cast, was to touch him at his meals, or whilst he was dressing his food, or was to enter into the space allotted by him for the dressing his food, he should be obliged to wash himself. That some casts would be obliged to wash their cloaths and body, others only their body; and some low casts would not be obliged to wash at all.

And being asked, whether he had not suffered great difficulties in the journey from his own country to England? he said, yes, very great; that from Bombay to Mocha, though the voyage lasted 27 days, he never ate any thing but what he brought with him, such as sweet-meats and preserved fruits, and pumkins vegetables, and drank the water he brought with him, and never tasted any food drest on board the ship. That when he arrived at Judda, the Governor, who is a Mahomedan, examined his Baggage, and ordered him into confinement in the same house with the Persees; that the Governor sent him victuals two or three times every day; but for two whole days he neither eat nor drank any thing; that they were surprized at his not eating, when they had sent him so good a dinner; and that after some difficulty he made them understand, by means of a boy, who spoke his language, that being a Bramin, he could not eat their victuals; that when he instructed them what his customs required, they furnished him with a tent, and other necessary conveniences for dressing his victuals; which he then did with his own hand.

Being asked, what is their mode of confinement of a debtor? he said, in the first place, it is not usual to confine them; but if the person should be refractory, and disobey the orders of the magistrate for discharging the debt, perhaps he would place a guard upon his house; if his debts amounted to more than his effects, the magistrate would then order distribution, but he never touches the images or ornaments of the place of worship, or of the apartments of the women and children, nor the furniture of the house; and that the guard suffers nobody to go in or out without his permission, but that it is not the business of the guard to prevent the victuals

coming in, unless he has a special order from the magistrate, for the business of the guard is to prevent any thing being carried out; that if the person has committed a crime, and the magistrate wishes to disgrace him, he may give such an order; that he must not, even in that case, disgrace the women.

That it sometimes happens that a Prince presses a zemindar for payment of his rents, and sends a guard upon his house, that if the zemindar is absent, and has not the money to pay, he absconds, but then the guard will not do any thing to affect his women; that if he should seize the property of a zemindar, it would not be justifiable to touch his religious ornaments, or his women's apartments; that besides, nothing is got by ruining a zemindar, who is the paramount proprietor of the land. Being asked, what dealings are allowed to the Bramins? he said, he is prohibited from trading in salt, spirituous, liquors, oil, butter, shoes, and from low trades; that an Hindoo is obliged to wash in a tank, or with water, in his own house; that not to wash at all, would be an impurity; that he cannot eat without, except in case of sickness. That if an Hindoo is excluded his cast, he is disgraced and becomes hallachore, and is considered by his family as dead; that even his funeral rites are performed, and his face is never to be seen afterwards. That the Hindoos consider the Water of the Ganges as sacred, and vow to wash in it on particular occasions. That long pilgrimages are considered as expiations.

11. SKETCHES OF THE HINDOOS, C. 1790

by Q. Crawfurd, 2 Vol, 1790, 1792. Extracts Vol- I pp 103-113, Vol-II 5, 104-113, 321

I Besides the estates of Rakhas, there were other hereditary lands belonging to persons of less note, and some that were appropriated to charitable and religious purposes. We likewise find, that in many parts of Hindostan, certain lands, or commons, were attached to the different villages, which were cultivated by joint labours of their inhabitants. The care of these lands was committed to the elders of the village, and their produce applied to maintain the poor, to defray the expence of festivals, and to pay dancers and players, who might occasionally be employed for the amusement of the villagers.

In such countries as have not the advantage of being watered by considerable rivers; or in such parts where the water cannot be conveyed from them to the adjacent fields; tanks were made, which, being filled during the periodical rains, furnished water for the rice fields, and for the cattle in the dry season. Some of these are of great extent and were made by inclosing deep and low situations with a strong mound of earth. (On the bank of the great tanks, are generally found a choultry and a temple.) Others of less magnitude, for the use of temples, towns, or gardens, are o f a quadrangular form, lined with stone, descending in regular steps from the margin to the bottom. (I have seen some of these measuring between 300 and 400 feet on the side, and regularly lined with granite. The Hindoos, from some superstitious notion, never construct anything of an exact-square, but rather oblong; though the difference is frequently so small as scarcely to be perceptible to the eye .)....

In the towns, as well as in most of the villages, are choultries, or public buildings for the reception of travellers, which were erected and endowed by the munificence of the prince, the generosity of some rich individual, or, not uncommonly, in consequence of some pious vow. A brahman resides near, who furnishes the needy traveller w ith food, and a mat to lie upon; and contiguous to them is a tank or well, that those who halt, may have it in their power to perform their ablutions before they eat, or proceed on their journey. The Dewuls, or temples, called by the Europeans Pagodas, a re still very numerous, especially in the southern provinces, and some of them of such remote antiquity, that no account is left, either in writing or by tradition, when or by whom they were erected....

The temples at Hurdwar, where the Ganges enters Hindostan; at Matra, the supposed birth-place of Krishna; at Oudgein; at Benares, and at Jaggernaut on the coast of Orissa; A temple on the top of a mountain at Tripetty, about 40 miles north east of Arcot; one on an island called Seringham, which is formed by the rivers Cavery and Coleroon, near Trichnopoly; and one on the island of Ramesseram, between Ceyloan and the continent, seem from the most distant times to have been constantly held in the highest veneration.... At the pagoda of jaggernaut, people of all casts and ranks eat together, without distinction or pre-eminence. This is peculiar to that place, being nowhere else allowed; and the permission, or rather order, for the pilgrims of different casts to do so, is said to be in commemoration of their hero and philosopher Krishna, who always recommended complacency and affection for each other. A great quantity

of victuals is every day prepared, and, after being placed before the alters, is partaken of by the pilgrims. (Other places Mahabalipuram, Eliphanta, Dwarika etc.)....

The inaugration of a temple is attended with great ceremony and proportional expence. After it is completely finished, the Brahmans are perhaps obliged to wait several months, before they find, by their astrology, a fit day for that solemnity. The day is afterwards annually celebrated, and is called The feast of the Dewul.

Vol 2 The husbands in general do not receive any dower with their wives.... The Riuts, or cultivators of the ground, are now kept in m any countries, in a state of great penury and wretchedness; a melancholy reflection, when we consider, that on their labour depends what we enjoy.... I am sorry to add that I fear he [the particular cultivator the author talked to] gave but too faithful a representation of the state of some millions besides himself....

With the first accounts we have of Hindostan, and as far as enquiry has yet been able to go, a mighty empire at once opens to our view, which, in extent, riches, and the number of its inhabitants, has not yet been equalled by any one nation on the globe. We find salutory laws, and an ingenious and refined system of religion, established; sciences and arts known and practised; and all of these evidently brought to perfection by the accumulated experience of many preceding ages. We see a country abounding in fair and opulent cities [Gour, Lucknouti, Cannoge on pp 106-13]; magnificent temples and palaces; useful and ingenious artists employing the precious stones and metals in curious workmanship; manufacturers fabricating cloths, which, in the fineness of their texure, and the beauty and duration of their dyes, have, even yet, been barely imitated by other nations.... The traveller was enabled to journey through the immense country with ease and safety; the public roads were shaded with trees to defend him from the scorching sun; at convenient distances buildings were erected for him to repose in; a friendly Brahman attended to supply his wants; and hospitality and the laws held out assistance and protection to all alike, without prejudice or partiality.

Their laws being interwoven with their religious doctrines, perhaps threw too great a preponderance on the side of the priesthood; but the evil which this might have occasioned seems, in some sort, to have been rectified by the exclusion of the members of that order from any temporal employments; so that while they guarded the people from tyranny, they secured to the sovereign the peaceable obedience of his subjects.... It is a usual charity with the natives who can afford it, to station persons during this season at the different choultries, to give gruel made of rice to all passengers who may chuse it. And they even erect temporary choultries, or sheds at short distances from each other, that those who are likely to be overcome by the heat may find places to repose in.

12. RESEARCHES CONCERNING THE LAWS, THEOLOGY, LEARNING, COMMERCE, ETC. OF ANCIENT AND MODERN INDIA.

By Q. Craufurd, Esq. In two volumes. Vol. I, London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strand. 1817.

(p.146) Such are the dresses we have observed among the Hindus, whatever part of their country we have visited. Mr.Forster, in his "Journey from Bengal to England", says that in Cashmire, the women likewise wear the short jacket above-mentioned, but instead of the cloth wrapped round the loins, they have a red petticoat with a border of different dyes, and instead of the hair being tied in a knot on the top of the head, have it, as it to be seen with the dancing women, plaited and hanging down behind, and a muslin veil that covers the head and extends rather lower than the middle of the body.

The Hindus are averse from many of those accomplishments in women which are admired by Europeans. They say, they would be injurious to that simplicity of manners, and decorum of behaviour, which are requisite to render them estimable in their families; that, by too much engaging the mind, they would divert their attention from their children and husbands, and give them a disrelish for those cares for which they think provinces has designed them. But the dancing-women, who, like the courtezans of ancient Greece, are the votaries of pleasure, are taught every qualification which may tend to captivate and amuse the other sex. They compose a separate class, live under the protection of government, and according to their own particular rules.

In the code of Hindu laws and customs, it is said; "If the property of a dancing woman should by any circumstance become subject to seizure, the magistrate shall except her clothes, jewels, and dwelling. In the same manner, to a soldier shall be left his arms; and to a man exercising any profession, the implements of that profession; but the rest of his property may be confiscated."

The dancing-women appear in a variety of dresses. Beside those already mentioned, they sometimes wear trowsers, like the Persians; a Jama of worked muslin, or gold or silver tissue; the hair plaited and hanging down behind, with spiral curls on each side of the face; and to the gold or silver rings on the ankles, in some of their dances they attach small bells of the same metals. The figures of the Bacchantes, which occur in some antique paintings, engravings, and sculptures, may serve to represent some of the dancing women of India.

No religious ceremony, or festival of any kind, is thought to be performed with requisite propriety and magnificence, unless accompanied by dancing; and every temple has a set of dancers belonging to it, which is more or less numerous, according to the importance and wealth of the foundation.

In a country of such vast extent of latitude, the complexion as well as the physical constitution of the people must be liable to variation; those in the northern parts being fairer and more robust than those in the southern provinces. But the Hindu women, in general, are finely shaped, gentle in their manners, and have something soft and musical in their voices.

Mr.Forster, in his letter from Cashmire, dated in April, 1783, speaking of the women, says: "They have a bright olive complexion, fine features, and are delicately shaped. There is a pleasing freedom in their manners, without any tendency to immodesty, which seems the result of that confidence which the Hindu husbands in general repose in their wives."1

All Hindu families are governed by the male senior, to whom great respect is shewn; nor will a son sit down in the presence of his father, until commanded by him so to do. Mr. Forster observes, that in the course of his residence in India, and acquaintance with the Hindus, he never knew an instance of direct undutifulness to parents.

In the code of Hindu laws, we find mention made of fire-arms; which, as the translator observes, in records of such unfathomable antiquity, must cause a consi...

13. INDIAN PRACTICE OF DISCUSSING IN PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES c.1800

from Francis Buchanan,: A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, 3 Volumes; London 1807.The journey was undertaken from April 23,1800 to July 5,1801 at the instruction of Governor General Lord Wellesley 24.2.1800. Extract: VOL:pp 342-3

I took an opportunity, in company with this aumildar. of examining into the management of the lac insect; and for this purpose we collectdd all the people who follow that employment. I have always found, that the more of any class of people were assembled, the more likely I was to get just information: Not that all of them spoke, some one or two men generally answered my questions; but they did it without fear of reflexions from those who might otherwise have been absent; as every one, if he chose, had an opportunity of speaking. The Hindus of all descriptions, so far as I have observed, are indeed very desirous of having every kind of business discussed in public assemblies.